

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIE-00 PM-04 CIAE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 INRE-00 /025 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE:DE
APPROVED BY NEA/PAB:PWLANDE
-----031753Z 057251 /40

O R 031705Z JUN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

UNCLAS STATE 128247

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, PK, US

SUBJECT: U.S. WITHHOLDS SALE OF JETS TO PAKISTAN

FOLLOWING IS ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN NEW YORK TIMES ON
JUNE 3:

QUOTE U.S. WITHHOLDS SALE OF JETS TO PAKISTAN - ACTION IS
LINKED TO INDIA RELATIONS AND TROUBLES OF BHUTTO REGIME:
WASHINGTON, JUNE 2 - THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, SEEKING TO
BOLSTER ITS TIES TO INDIA, HAS DECIDED TO WITHHOLD THE
SALE OF MILITARY JETS SOUGHT BY PAKISTAN, ACCORDING TO
STATE DEPARTMENT SOURCES.

IN DECIDING TO BAR THE SALE OF 110 A-7 ATTACK PLANES TO
PAKISTAN, THE ADMINISTRATION WAS ALSO CONSIDERING TWO OTHER
KEY FACTORS: THE TENUOUS NATURE OF PRIME MINISTER ZULFIKAR
ALI BHUTTO'S GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS BEEN BESET BY VIOLENT
AGITATION, AND PAKISTAN'S POTENTIAL ROLE AS A NUCLEAR
NATION, WHICH IS ANATHEMA TO WASHINGTON.
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PRESIDENT CARTER'S NEW POLICY OF RESTRICTING SALES OF
WEAPONS ABROAD WAS A FURTHER ELEMENT IN THE DECISION TO
WITHHOLD THE JETS. THAT POLICY, ANNOUNCED TWO WEEKS AGO,
SAID THAT FUTURE ARMS EXPORTS WOULD BE RESTRICTED, AND

WOULD BE VIEWED AS AN QUOTE EXCEPTIONAL UNQUOTE FOREIGN

POLICY IMPLEMENT TO BE USED ONLY WHEN IT CONTRIBUTED TO AMERICAN NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS.

THREAT TO BALANCE - ADMINISTRATION SOURCES SUGGESTED THAT THE SALE WAS DISAPPROVED LARGELY BECAUSE THE ADDITION OF A-7'S TO PAKISTAN'S AIR FORCE WOULD BE VIEWED, PARTICULARLY BY INDIA, AS DISRUPTING THE BALANCE OF POWER ON THE SUB-CONTINENT.

INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES HAVE FLOUNDERED IN RECENT YEARS, WITH THE FORMER PRIME MINISTER, INDIRA GANDHI, RETAINING A COOL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NIXON AND FORD ADMINISTRATIONS. THE NEW PRIME MINISTER, MORARJI R. DESAI, HAS SOUGHT TO IMPROVE LINKS WITH THE UNITED STATES, AND THE SALE OF A-7'S TO PAKISTAN, A TRADITIONAL FOE OF INDIA, WOULD PROBABLY HAVE RETARDED A CLOSER INDIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONSHIP.

ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SPECULATION THAT ANOTHER SALE PROPOSAL, FOR 250 F-18L FIGHTER-INTERCEPTORS TO IRAN, MIGHT ALSO BE JEOPARDIZED BY THE ADMINISTRATION'S ARMS-SALES POLICY, STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID THAT NO DECISION HAD YET BEEN MADE.

ALSO LEFT UNCLEAR IS THE FATE OF THE A-7 PRODUCTION LINE. THE PROSPECTIVE 500 MILLION DOLLAR SALE TO PAKISTAN WAS IMPORTANT TO THE A-7'S MANUFACTURER, THE LTV CORPORATION. OFFICIALS SAID TODAY THAT WITHOUT THE SALE LTV WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO SHUT DOWN ITS A-7 PRODUCTION LINE WITHIN UNCLASSIFIED

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18 MONTHS.

TIES WITH BHUTTO COOL - MR. BHUTTO, WHO MAINTAINED CLOSE TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES, UNTIL RECENTLY, HAS BEEN THE TARGET OF DISCONTENT IN PAKISTAN SINCE CONTROVERSIAL ELECTIONS NEARLY THREE MONTHS AGO. AMID OPPOSITION CHARGES THAT THE ELECTION WAS RIGGED, PAKISTAN HAS BEEN TORN BY RIOTING THAT THREATENS THE BHUTTO GOVERNMENT.

MR. BHUTTO HAS SINCE ACCUSED WASHINGTON OF FINANCING HIS OPPONENTS, AND HAS SPOKEN ANGRILY OF AMERICAN ATTEMPTS TO PERSUADE PAKISTAN TO CANCEL ITS CONTRACT TO BUY A FRENCH NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT. SUCH A PLANT SEPARATES PLUTONIUM FROM THE SPENT FUEL OF A NUCLEAR POWER PLANT, AND THE PLUTONIUM COULD BE USED TO PRODUCE NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

EARLIER THIS WEEK, THE NEW YORK TIMES REPORTED FROM PARIS THAT FRANCE WAS WITHHOLDING DELIVERY OF CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF THE NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT TO PAKISTAN. THE DE-

CISION - WHICH HAS BEEN DENIED BY THE FRENCH FOREIGN
OFFICE - WOULD BRING FRANCE IN LINE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S
CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE EXPORT OF NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANTS
THAT WOULD ENABLE COUNTRIES TO DEVELOP ATOMIC WEAPONS.

AN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL SAID TODAY THAT THE FRENCH
GOVERNMENT WAS BACKING OUT OF THE SALE, BUT THAT THE PRO-
BLEM WAS TO MOVE OUT OF THE DEAL QUOTE GRACEFULLY, UNQUOTE
AND WITHOUT INTIMATIONS OF AMERICAN PRESSURE. END QUOTE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, PRESS COMMENTS, POLICIES, MILITARY SALES, JET AIRCRAFT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PWLANDE:DE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770198-0982
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From: STATE
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770692/aaaadcpi.tel
Line Count: 128
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 39af4685-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2284286
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: U.S. WITHHOLDS SALE OF JETS TO PAKISTAN FOLLOWING IS ARTICLE WHICH APPEARED IN NEW YORK TIMES ON JUNE 3
TAGS: MASS, SOPN, PK, US, NEW YORK TIMES
To: ISLAMABAD
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/39af4685-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009